International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT)
ISSN: 2617-0299
www.ijllt.org

Oral Communication Apprehension (OCA) among Undergraduate Accounting and Journalism Students in Bangladesh

Maliha Tabassum[1]* & Md. Sahid Hossain[2]
[1]*Lecturer, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Bangladesh University of Professionals, Mirpur Cantonment, Dhaka-1216, Bangladesh*
[2]*Lecturer, Department of Accounting and Information Systems, Bangladesh University of Professionals, Mirpur Cantonment, Dhaka-1216, Bangladesh*
Corresponding Author: Maliha Tabassum, E-mail: malihawow@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Received: December 14, 2019
Accepted: January 18, 2020
Published: January 31, 2020
Volume: 3
Issue: 1
DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2020.3.1.20

KEYWORDS

Oral Communication Apprehension, Undergraduate, Accounting, Journalism, Bangladesh

ABSTRACT

Communication apprehension especially oral communication apprehension (OCA) is very prevalent among the students of Bangladesh. Students with good academic results are often found weak in oral skills. The objective of this study is to explore the determinants and level of OCA among the Undergraduate accounting and journalism students in Bangladesh. Total 182 students were taken as sample size from one prominent educational institution of Bangladesh for a survey with PRCA (Personal Report of Communication Apprehension) 24 worksheet. The Study explored if there is any significant difference in OCA depending on different variables like Department, Age, CGPA, Year, Gender and Educational Background. The result found CGPA and educational background to have 10% and 1% significance level respectively excluding other variables. The study adds implications for the development of a strong communication skill, the development of "good communicators" and for managing balance between academic knowledge and mass communication.

Introduction [1]

In today's competitive scenario, sound communication skill is a must for both for academic and professional achievement. Especially oral communication is an important life skill to learn. For a student, effective oral communication is essential for a successful future career. Since 1971 a good number of researchers (McCroskey & Andersen, 1977; Davis & Scott, 1978; Powers & Smythe, 1980) are working on the effect of communication in student learning. Especially oral communication competency has become a core focus in many studies.

OCA has been elaborated differently, from different perspectives over time to time. Zimbardo (1977) stated it as a fuzzy concept and defined it as the discomfort in communication occurring in various contexts. He also included poor verbal skills as one of the characteristics of it and stated that all these make a person orally incompetent in talking. Bydon and Scott (2000) saw it as anxiety referring as discomfort in feeling which people experience before, during or even after public speaking. Some scholars linked it only with a big audience by naming it 'Stage Fright' (Ayres, 1986); not only on stage, but also off stage within a very normal communicative environment. Some researchers described it as a tendency to get nervous particularly within only a few settings for example particularly in public speaking. According to them, it can occur in situations in an everyday basis where people communicate or may even be part of an anxiety trait in general that arise in many phrases, from different angles (Friedman, 1980). This is what McCroskey called fear of having real or mediated communication with singular or plural in number from

individual level of anxiety (1977). He described four contexts while developing an OCA measuring scale (face to face, in meeting, in group and in public) and said these contexts describe diverse situations for each individual.

It is true that OCA hits on so many levels. That is why, according to McCroskey, it is important to distinguish among concepts like 'communication apprehension', 'reticence', and 'unwillingness to communicate' as they can be confusing considering the context of one area within another (McCroskey, 1977). No matter what the context is or will become, OCA just cannot be ignored as it is one of the major hindrances to a successful communication.

University students who will start their career soon after graduating, being competent in communication skills is essential for them. Students need to give emphasis to develop their communication skills to be successful in their chosen profession (Ihmeideh, Al-Omari, & Al-Dababneh, 2010). Conquering communication apprehension (CA) especially oral one (Idris, 2010) is very much important for student's further development. Research found close connection between different disciplines and different levels of discomfort among students (Arquero, Hassall, Joyce, & Donoso, 2007), while some (Sundem, Williums, & Chironna, 1990) found lack of self-direction and nature of their discipline creating OCA among students.

Researchers also tried to find out several factors that can cause OCA among students. Seven factors have been commonly identified in a child (McCroskey, 1980; Bond, 1984): 1. Lower level of intellectual skills 2. Deficiencies in speech skills 3. Being socially introvert by choice 4. Alienation from society 5. Anxiety in communication 6. Low level of social self-esteem and 7. Differences in cultural/ ethnic norms. One of these factors can lead to have higher OCA. Again, having all these factors present as traits does not mean that they have a higher level of OCA, maybe they have moderate or low one (McCroskey, 1980). Glaser described it relating to Negative Cognitive Appraisal Model (Glaser, 1981) where once being criticized badly, the child gives up communicating with surroundings and becomes quiet. In worst case scenario just with a general negative reaction, the student started to avoid a real-time oral communication situation. This will make him/her isolated and will have adverse effect on his/her future communication skills alongside other soft skills.

This study explores the nature and level of OCA by doing cross-sectional investigation of the OCA of students studying in two separate disciplines (Accounting and Journalism) and finds the impact of different variables on students. The purpose of the study is to analyze and understand the OCA level in the selected sample and to explore its relationships with six variables (departments, year, gender, age, educational background and CGPA) which will contribute to the understanding of OCA among students. The next section of the paper describes the previous literatures. Then, research objective and problem statement sections have been showed. Following that, methodology and results sections are explained. Later, analysis and discussion section are presented. Finally, conclusion section is critically discussed.

Literature Review

The concept of OCA was not developed overnight. Public speaking was one of the core concerns for students since 19th century. Surprisingly, there are only a few available instruments to reliably measure the level of public speaking anxiety till now. Reporting public speaking anxiety as a major issue: a short instrumental version was developed by Gilkinson back in 1942.

CA related to oral communication was first identified, explored and explained by McCroskey (1970) where he described it as "a broadly based anxiety related to oral communication". In 1982, he re-conceptualized CA saying ''CA must be considered a central concern of any instructional program concerned with more effective communication as a targeted outcome, whether the program is labeled a program in communication competence or a program in communication skill'' (McCroskey, 1982). He developed PRCA 24 which is one of the mostly used scales for researchers and academicians. But some other scales were also used time to time. For example, Levine and McCroskey (1990) did a quantitative survey on pharmacy students with a test of rival measurement models of the PRCA 24.

In that study, they tested PRCA 24 measurement scale against rival models including linear, one-dimensional model, Guttman simplex and second-order factor structure. They found second-order factor structure model fits well with highly used PRCA 24 measurement model but cannot go better against popularized PRCA 24 scale. They have admitted the fact that PRCA 24 scale is well balanced, flexible scale for measuring OCA.

In a cross-cultural study (Arquero, Hassall, Joyce, & Donoso, 2007) researcher did a comparative study to understand the similarity and dissimilarity experienced by accounting students of UK and Spain. Students of other disciplines at the same institutions were also considered as sample to get a broader perspective. The results confirmed that European accounting students have higher levels of communication apprehension.

Most of the researches identified OCA as a prime factor hindering individual's communication skill have focused specifically on quantitative analysis based on several scientific scales. Byrne, Flood and Shanahan (2012) explored the phenomenon qualitatively by interviewing students with separate disciplines (accounting and business students of first year) in one of the Ireland's higher educational institutions who have different levels of OCA. How the students were communicating in different contexts are analyzed and impact of different factors, for example prior communication experience is considered.

The findings stated that despite having variations in communication experiences apprehension typically increases in public sphere for almost all students. Also, OCA is influenced by anxiety in peer evaluation, communicating with new people and even in preparation activities. Their study also recommended educators adapting appropriate teaching practice and designing fruitful interventions to overcome OCA.

Devi and Feroz (2008) found OCA level varying from person to person. Conducting a study on 32 undergraduate students of electrical engineering faculty, they investigated the effect of a special semester course where the students were taught different soft skills like writing resumes, oral communication strategies, oral presentation, agenda and minutes of a meeting etc. The unique part of this study was their CA was examined twice (before and after) their exposure to different lectures. The study found the existence of CA in most undergraduate students but at a very moderate level. Again, young engineers were found with a lower level of OCA than other students. The overall study had a very positive result showing no correlation between communicative apprehension and lecturer's evaluation about individual student. Students having more confidence had greater level of communication competency and researchers found it very high among young undergraduates.

Prior studies have also shown the connection between OCA, curriculum development and academic performance. Gardner, Stringer and Whiting (2005) did a cross-sectional investigation of the CA of accounting students at a university in New Zealand. The results showed that final year students get exposure to greater communication demands. Communication apprehension level for final year students declined most comparing to first year which showed the effectiveness of their higher education. The study found curriculum of New Zealand more modern and self-directing for students to lessen their levels of OCA, although results did not find any solid connection between communication apprehension levels and students' gradual increase of academic result.

Gender was considered an important variable in many researches. Pearson, Child, DeGreeff, Semlak and Burnett (2011) suggested that the perception of men and women is different on OCA and socialization is why they behave differently during communication encounters in different social contexts. Simon et al. (1995) took gender as their prime variable and found higher communication apprehension among females major in accounting. Borzi & Mills (2001) found the OCA level is higher in male comparing to female accounting students in public speaking.

On the other hand, Gaibani and Elmenfi (2014) revealed that though gender has a positive relationship in a public sphere, it does not have any correlation with the level of communication competency. This means gender has little effect in OCA. This result supports that of Matsuda and Gobel (2004) who found no significant effect of gender on

the overall anxiety of public speaking although had doubt on their own result considering uneven number of female and male in their sampling.

After reviewing the previous literatures, we have found that earlier researchers studied mostly on developed countries like New Zealand, UK, Spain, Ireland etc. So, this study is unique in the context of a developing country like Bangladesh. Again, there is scarcity of research on this topic in recent time though it is one of the most important topics for research. Prior studies were done based on either single department students or different departments' students of different countries. Here, a comparative study may be possible considering either two departments' students of a single university. Earlier researchers did their studies considering either only first year students or final year students as sample. So, there is a gap for research considering both year students as sample in a single research. Finding several research gaps in the prior works, this study aims to fill them up by doing a comparative study between two departments of a prominent university in the context of Bangladesh. Based on the above discussion, following hypotheses are developed:

H1: Department has significant impact on OCA

H2: Age has significant negative impact on OCA

H3: CGPA has significant negative impact on OCA

H4: Year has significant impact on OCA

H5: Gender has significant impact on OCA

H6: Education background has significant impact on OCA

Research Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to carry out a quantitative study to explore the nature of OCA existing among the undergraduate accounting and journalism students of Bangladesh. In understanding OCA and meeting the need of the study by comparing two separate disciplines, the specific objectives are as followed:

- To identify the level of OCA among accounting and journalism students of Bangladesh
- To determine the impact of department, year, gender, age, educational background and academic performance of the students of accounting and journalism on OCA score.

Problem Statement

This study focuses on OCA among university students, by measuring the level and different variables of OCA. Because of different affecting variables stated earlier (e.g. Arquero, Hassall, Joyce, & Donoso, 2007; Gaibani & Elmenfi, 2014), studies found different level of OCA in different disciplines. The amount of works done on accounting major students suffering OCA (Simons et al., 1995; Borzi & Mills, 2001; Hassall, Joyce, Ottewill, Arquero, & Donoso, 2000 ; Ruchala & Hill, 1994; Gardner et al., 2005) is appreciable, but the irony is not much have been found especially from Bangladesh perspective. This study aims to focus especially on the Bangladeshi students whether they are suffering from OCA or not from a developing country perspective.

However, other disciplines did not get the same level of treatment even in outside Bangladesh. Of course, that does not mean other students have less or low level of OCA. It is a vast field area that needs to be explored. Especially there is scarcity of study relating journalism major as they work in strategic communication like in marketing, public relations, advertising and in areas such as entertainment, gaming, politics, health care. Most of the universities have mass communication included in their curriculum alongside practical journalism courses, so this area should come under special consideration to identify OCA. Therefore, in this study the authors work with two separate disciplines – accounting and journalism to find out the bigger picture of students suffering from OCA.

In a whole, this study will explore the nature and level of OCA among accounting and journalism students from Bangladesh perspective. The data gathered and analyzed in this study may provide stakeholders with information relating to the level of OCA among the students as well as the impact of department, year, gender, age, educational background and academic performance on OCA score.

Methodology

The study adopts a quantitative approach to explore the nature of OCA phenomenon experienced by students of two separate disciplines. Two departments of a public university were considered as target population for the study. From 16 departments of Bangladesh University of Professionals, the authors considered 2 departments which are Department of Accounting and Information Systems (AIS) and Department of Mass Communication and Journalism (MCJ). For this study, a convenient collection technique was used to collect data from the first and third-year students. Total 182 students (equal students from each department) were taken as sample size for the questionnaire survey where they were given Personal Report on Communication Apprehension (PRCA 24) worksheet to input their information. The sample had equal participation of both male and female students. The data were then statistically analyzed with the help of Stata software (Version 11.0).

The instrument used here is the most widely applied instrument called the PRCA 24 which was adopted from (McCroskey, 2006, p.40). It measures the total level of OCA, alongside four sub-levels, which are created to understand and analyze communication in different contexts like interpersonal speaking, in small groups, in meetings, and in public (McCroskey, 2006, p.42). This instrument is composed of twenty-four statements concerning experience of an individual while communicating in different context, from a very personal to public level. In this questionnaire, there is no right or wrong answer. Each statement is marked by students considering whether they strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree with that information which ultimately add value to their total score.

Department, age, CGPA, class rank (year), gender and educational background are the five key variables that are considered to determine the relationship between these variables and OCA score. The sample consists of 182 students from two departments of Bangladesh University of Professionals. Descriptive statistics (total observation, mean, standard deviations minimum and maximum) are used to investigate the extent of OCA, department, age, CGPA, class rank (year), gender, educational background, overall score, group discussion (GD) score, meeting score, interpersonal score and public speaking (PS) score. To determine the relationship among the variables and how much they are related with OCA score, Pearson correlation coefficient (at 1%, 5% and 10% significant levels) is used. Multiple linear regression model is used to determine the effect of independent variables (department, age, CGPA, class rank (year), gender and educational background) on dependent variable (OCA score). The model is:

$$\text{OCA score}_i = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Department}_i + \beta_2 \text{Age}_i + \beta_3 \text{CGPA}_i + \beta_4 \text{Year}_i + \beta_5 \text{Gender}_{i+} \beta_6 \text{Educational Background}_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Where, Department= dichotomous variable (student of AIS=1 and student of MCJ=0), Age= age of the students, CGPA = Cumulative Grade Point Average of the students, Year = dichotomous variable (student of 1st year=1 and student of 3rd year=0), Gender= dichotomous variable (male student =1 and female student=0), Educational Background= dichotomous variable (student from Bangla medium=1 and student from English medium or version =0), ε= Random error and $_{i=}$ Item ($_i$).

Results

The paper intends to identify the level of OCA among the AIS and MCJ students of Bangladesh and the impact of department, age, CGPA, class rank (year), gender and educational background on OCA score.

Table 1: *Gender, class rank and educational background by major of students surveyed*

Major	Male	Female	1st Year	3rd year	English Medium/Version	Bangla Medium
AIS	53	37	40	50	22	68
MCJ	56	36	54	38	3	89
Total	109	73	94	88	25	157

According to Table 1, 60% of the sample size represents male and 40% are female. Among the male students, 49% are from AIS department and 51% are from MCJ department. But, among the female students, 51% from AIS department and 49% from MCJ department. 52% of the sample size represents 1st year students and 48% are 3rd year students. Among the 1st year students, 43% are from AIS department and 57% are from MCJ department. But, among the 3rd year students, 57% from AIS department and 43% from MCJ department. 14% of the sample size represents English medium/version students and 86% are Bangla version students. Among the English medium/version students, 88% are from AIS department and 12% are from MCJ department. But, among the Bangla version students, 43% from AIS department and 57% from MCJ department.

Table 2: *Descriptive statistics*

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Department	182	0.49	0.50	0	1
Age	182	21.01	1.30	18	24
CGPA	182	3.25	0.36	1.9	3.99
Year	182	0.51	0.50	0	1
Gender	182	0.59	0.49	0	1
Educational Background	182	0.86	0.34	0	1
Overall Score	182	63.78	14.21	24	95
GD score	182	13.98	3.90	6	30
Meeting Score	182	16.58	4.85	6	30
Interpersonal Score	182	15.30	4.40	6	30
PS Score	182	18.60	5.19	3	30

In table 2, mean age is 21 where mean CGPA is 3.25. Again, mean overall score is 64 while its standard deviation is 14.21. Besides, mean GD score is 14 where mean meeting score is 17. Though, mean interpersonal score is 15, mean PS score is 19.

Mean OCA score of male students is lower than that of female students. The difference is less for MCJ students than AIS students. Again, male AIS students have lower mean OCA score than that of male MCJ students. Again, female AIS students have lower mean OCA score than that of female MCJ students as well. Standard deviation of OCA score for male students is higher than that of female students. The difference is less for AIS students than MCJ students. Again, male AIS students have higher standard deviation of OCA score than that of male MCJ students. Besides, female AIS students have higher standard deviation of OCA score than that of female MCJ students as well. Minimum OCA score of male students is lower than that of female students. The difference is more for MCJ students than AIS students. Again, male MCJ students have lower minimum OCA score than that of male AIS students. But, female AIS students have much lower minimum OCA score than that of female MCJ students. Maximum OCA score of female students is much lower than that of male AIS students. The difference is more for MCJ students than AIS students. Again, male MCJ students have higher maximum OCA score than that of male AIS students. But, female AIS students have higher maximum OCA score than that of female MCJ students in Table 3.

Table 3: *OCA by gender*

	Total	AIS	MCJ
Male			
Obs	109	53	56
Mean	63.75	60.84	66.5
Std. Dev.	14.33	15.10	13.11
Min	24	34	24
Max	95	92	95
Female			
Obs	73	37	36
Mean	63.83	62.27	65.44
Std. Dev.	14.12	15.08	13.07
Min	27	27	42
Max	94	94	91

Again, Mean OCA score of 1st year students is higher than that of 3rd year students. The difference is more for MCJ students than AIS students. Again, 1st year AIS students have lower mean OCA score than that of 1st year MCJ students. Again, 3rd year AIS students have lower mean OCA score than that of 3rd year MCJ students as well. Standard deviation of OCA score for 1st year students is much lower than that of 3rd year students. The difference is less for AIS students than MCJ students. Again, 1st year AIS students have higher standard deviation of OCA score than that of 1st year MCJ students. Besides, 3rd year AIS students have higher standard deviation of OCA score than that of 3rd year MCJ students as well. Minimum OCA score of 1st year students is much lower than that of 3rd year students. The difference is more for MCJ students than AIS students. Again, 1st year MCJ students have lower minimum OCA score than that of 1st year AIS students. But, 3rd year AIS students have much lower minimum OCA score than that of 3rd year MCJ students. Maximum OCA score of 3rd year students is much higher than that of 1st year AIS students. The difference is more for MCJ students than AIS students. Again, 1st year AIS students have higher maximum OCA score than that of 1st year MCJ students. But, 3rd year MCJ students have higher maximum OCA score than that of 3rd year AIS students (See table 4).

Table 4: *OCA by class rank*

	Total	AIS	MCJ
1st year			
Obs	94	40	54
Mean	63.78	63.5	64
Std. Dev.	13.29	14.80	12.19
Min	24	34	24
Max	94	94	91
3rd year			
Obs	88	50	38
Mean	63.78	59.78	69.05
Std. Dev.	15.20	15.14	13.77
Min	27	27	40
Max	95	92	95

Table 5: *OCA by educational background*

	Total	AIS	MCJ
English medium/version			
Obs	25	22	3
Mean	53.4	53.63	51.66
Std. Dev.	11.28	11.62	10.21
Min	34	34	40
Max	78	78	59
Bangla medium			
Obs	157	68	89
Mean	65.43	63.95	66.57
Std. Dev.	13.95	15.20	12.89
Min	24	27	24
Max	95	94	95

In table 5, Mean OCA score of English medium/version students is much lower than that of Bangla medium students. The difference is more for MCJ students than AIS students. Again, English medium/version AIS students have higher mean OCA score than that of English medium/version MCJ students. But, Bangla medium AIS students have lower mean OCA score than that of Bangla medium MCJ students. Standard deviation of OCA score for English medium/version students is much lower than that of Bangla medium students. The difference is more for AIS students than MCJ students. Again, English medium/version AIS students have higher standard deviation of OCA score than that of English medium/version MCJ students. Bangla medium AIS students have higher standard deviation of OCA score than that of Bangla medium MCJ students as well. Minimum OCA score of Bangla medium students is much lower than that of English medium/version students. The difference is more for MCJ students than AIS students. Again, English medium/version AIS students have much lower minimum OCA score than that of English medium/version MCJ students. But, Bangla medium MCJ students have lower minimum OCA score than that of Bangla medium AIS students. Maximum OCA score of Bangla medium students is much higher than that of English medium/version students. The difference is more for MCJ students than AIS students. Again, English medium/version AIS students have higher maximum OCA score than that of English medium/version MCJ students. But, Bangla medium MCJ students have higher maximum OCA score than that of Bangla medium AIS students.

Table 6: *Pearson correlation*

	Overall Score	Educational Background	Gender	Year	CGPA	Age	Department
Overall Score	1						
Educational Background	0.29***	1					
Gender	-0.0029	-0.0009	1				
Year	0.0001	0.0291	-0.16**	1			
CGPA	-0.10	-0.10	-0.21***	-0.15**	1		
Age	0.09	0.12*	0.25***	-0.66***	0.10	1	
Department	-0.16**	-0.30***	-0.02	-0.14*	-0.26***	-0.06	1

***At 1% significance level
** At 5% significance level
* At 10% significance level

According to Table 6, educational background (0.29) and department (-0.16) have correlation with the overall score of OCA at 1% significance level and 5% significance level respectively.

Table 7: *Regression analysis*

Source	SS	Df	MS
Model	4036.55	6	672.75
Residual	32524.09	175	185.85
Total	36560.64	181	201.99

Number of obs	182
F (6, 175)	3.62
Prob > F	0.0021
R-squared	0.11
Adj R-squared	0.07
Root MSE	13.63

Overall Score	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P>|t|	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Educational Background	9.36	3.20	2.93	0.004	3.05	15.68
Gender	-1.62	2.21	-0.73	0.46	-6.00	2.75
Year	0.13	2.86	0.05	0.96	-5.52	5.78
CGPA	-5.34	3.17	-1.68	0.09	-11.60	0.91
Age	0.97	1.09	0.89	0.37	-1.18	3.14
Department	-3.54	2.34	-1.51	0.13	-8.16	1.07
_Cons	55.21	26.66	2.07	0.04	2.59	107.83

In table 7, among the 6 hypotheses, 2 hypotheses have been accepted. CGPA has negative impact on OCA (H3) at 10% significance level and educational background (H6) has impact on OCA at 1% significance level. The other hypotheses are rejected. The coefficient of Educational Background, Gender, Year, CGPA, Age, and Department are 9.36, -1.62, 0.13, -5.34, 0.97, and -3.54 respectively in Table 7.

Table 8: *Multicollinearity test*

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
Year	2.01	0.49
Age	2	0.49
Department	1.34	0.74
CGPA	1.28	0.78
Educational Background	1.19	0.84
Gender	1.16	0.86
Mean VIF	1.5	

In table 8, for robustness checking, multicollinearity test is done here. It checks whether there is any multicollinearity problem exists among the variables or not. According to Table 8, the mean VIF value is below 10. So, there is no multicollinearity problem exists among the variables (Gujrarati, 2003).

Breusch-Pagan test is also done to check whether there is any heteroskedasticity problem or not. As the chi square value is low and the probability is high (statistically insignificant), there is no heteroskedasticity problem (see Table 9). So, the model is well fitted.

Table 9: Breusch-Pagan / Cook-Weisberg test for heteroskedasticity
Ho: Constant variance
Variables: fitted values of overall score

chi2(1)	0.13
Prob > chi2	0.71

Analysis and Discussion

Mean overall score is 64 which reflect average level of OCA. Still there is a big deviation of this score among the students. Besides, mean GD score is 14 while mean meeting score is 17. Though, mean interpersonal score is 15, mean PS score is 19. All the score of sub-categories also reflect average level of OCA. So, the undergraduate accounting and journalism students of Bangladesh have moderate level of OCA. It can be improved by educating themselves with required communicating tools and techniques.

As stated earlier, students were given PRCA 24 worksheet to input their information. Alongside, they were given a self- evaluator table where they can evaluate their own score and determine their own level of OCA both overall and categorically from a very personal level. This means all students participated in this research are aware about their level of OCA now. It is expected that students with higher/ moderate OCA will try to overcome it and students with lower OCA will have more confidence onwards.

The study did not find significant difference in the OCA level between male and female which also supports the findings of Dar and Khan (2014). Again, male AIS students have lower mean OCA score than that of male MCJ students and female AIS students have lower mean OCA score than that of female MCJ students. The results confirm the outcomes of Borzi and Mills (2001). Then again female AIS students have higher maximum OCA score than that of female MCJ students which also supports the findings of Simmons et al. (1995). The overall finding shows that the average OCA score is higher in MCJ students than in AIS students but in certain cases, some participants of AIS got maximum OCA score which is quite high comparing to MCJ.

This research denies the fact of having any significant impact of OCA on gender although some researchers (Person et al., 2011) found it impactful as men and women having different socialization and communication encounters. This result clearly indicates the improved performance of female students over time in overcoming barriers in oral communication.

Mean OCA score of 1st year students is higher than that of 3rd year students which also supports the findings of (Gardner et al., 2005). It shows a positive impact of university education as the graph goes down with years giving students ample scope and opportunities to overcome the level of OCA.

As the study was based on developed hypothesis, here are the results. Among the 6 hypotheses, 2 hypotheses (H3 and H6) have been accepted. CGPA has negative impact on OCA (H3) at 10% significance level which supports the findings of (McCroskey and Anderson, 1976). Educational background (H6) has impact on OCA at 1% significance level which also supports the findings of (Dar and Khan, 2014). The other 4 hypotheses are rejected. Department (H1) has no significant impact on OCA as the p value is 0.13. Again, age (H2) has insignificant positive impact on OCA (p value 0.37). Besides, year (H4) has no significant impact on OCA because its p value is 0.96. Although mean 0CA score shows effectiveness of higher studies in senior students but the impact is not significant enough. At last, Gender (H5) has insignificant impact on OCA (p value 0.46).

Conclusion

The study satisfies identified demands to research on the determinants and the level of OCA among the undergraduate accounting and journalism students of Bangladesh. The study adds implications for the development of a strong communication skill, the development of "good communicators" and for managing balance between academic knowledge and mass communication. Significant difference is absent in the OCA level between male and female. Both male and female AIS students have lower mean OCA score than that of both male and female MCJ students. Mean OCA score of 1st year students is higher than that of 3rd year students. CGPA has negative impact and educational background has impact on OCA at 10% and 1% significance levels respectively. Due to the selected research method, the study outcomes may not be generalized. So, future researchers are encouraged to study using qualitative research method.

About the authors

Maliha Tabassum, Lecturer, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, is currently working in Bangladesh University of Professionals. Her areas of interest are communication and educational psychology.

Md. Sahid Hossain, Lecturer, Department of Accounting and Information Systems, is currently working in Bangladesh University of Professionals. His areas of interest are accounting and communication psychology.

References

[1] Arquero, J., Hassall, T., Joyce, J., & Donoso, J. (2007). Accounting Students and Communication Apprehension: A Study of Spanish and UK Students. *European Accounting Review*, *16*(2), 299-322. doi: 10.1080/09638180701391337

[2] Byrne, M., Flood, B., & Shanahan, D. (2012). A Qualitative Exploration of Oral Communication Apprehension. *Accounting Education*, *21*(6), 565-581. doi: 10.1080/09639284.2012.725636

[3] Borzi, M., & Mills, T. (2001). Communication Apprehension in Upper Level Accounting Students: An Assessment of Skill Development. *Journal of Education for Business*, *76*(4), 193-198. doi: 10.1080/08832320109601310

[4] Fordham, D.R., & Gabbin, A.L. (1996). Skills versus Apprehension: Empirical Evidence on Oral Communication. *Business Communication Quarterly, 59(3)*, 88-98.

[5] Frymier, A., & Houser, M. (2015). The Role of Oral Participation in Student Engagement. *Communication Education,* 65(1), 83-104. doi: 10.1080/03634523.2015.1066019

[6] Gaibani, A., & Elmenfi, F. (2019). The Role of Gender in Influencing Public Speaking Anxiety. Retrieved from https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Role-of-Gender-in-Influencing-Public-Speaking-Gaibani Elmenfi/3698dbd31c02f4bb0eb7643fca06841f270238fd

[7] Gardner, C., Milne, M., Stringer, C., & Whiting, R. (2005). Oral and Written Communication Apprehension in Accounting Students: Curriculum Impacts and Impacts on Academic Performance. *Accounting Education, 14(3)*, 313-336.

[8] Gilkinson, H. (1942). Social Fears as Reported by Students in College Speech Classes. *Speech Monographs, 9(1)*, 141-160.

[9] Hassall, T., Joyce, J., Ottewill, R., Arquero, J., & Donoso, J. (2000). Communication Apprehension in UK and Spanish Business and Accounting Students. *Education and Training, 42(2)*, 93-100.

[10] Ihmeideh, F. M., Al-Omari, A. A., & Al-Dababneh, K. A. (2010). Attitudes toward Communication Skills among Students'-Teachers' in Jordanian Public Universities. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *35(4),* 8-44.

[11] McCroskey, J.C. (1970). Measures of Communication-Bound Anxiety, *Speech Monographs, 37(4)*, 269-277.

[12] McCroskey, J. (1982). Oral Communication Apprehension: A Reconceptualization. *Annals of the International Communication Association, 6(1),* 136-170.

[13] Pearson, J.C., Child, J.T., DeGreeff, B.L., Semlak, J.L., & Burnett, A., (2011). The Influence of Biological Sex, Self-Esteem, and Communication Apprehension on Unwillingness to Communicate. *Atlantic Journal of Communication, 19(4),* 216-227.

[14] Rafek, M.B., Ramli, N.H.L.B., Iksan, H.B., Harith, N.M., & Abas, A.I.B.C. (2014). Gender and Language: Communication Apprehension in Second Language Learning. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 123,* 90-96.

[15] Ruchala, L.V., & Hill, J.W. (1994). Reducing Accounting Students' Oral Communication Apprehension: Empirical Evidence. *Journal of Accounting Education*, *12*(4), 283-303.

[16] Simons, K., Higgins, M., & Lowe, D. (1995). A Profile of Communication Apprehension in Accounting Majors: Implications for Teaching and Curriculum Revision. *Journal of Accounting Education*, *13*(2), 159-176.

[17] Stanga. K.G., and Ladd, R.T. (1990). Oral Communication Apprehension in Beginning Accounting Majors: An Exploratory Study. *Issues in Accounting Education, 5(2),* 180-194.

[18] Sundem. G.L., Williams, D.Z., & Chironna, J.F. (1990). The Revolution in Accounting Education. *Management Accounting,* 72(6), 49.